ADJOURNMENT MOTION.

President: I have received a notice of an adjournment motion from Mr. Narayana Kurup:—

> "I beg leave to move that the business of this House be adjourned for discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the situation arising out of the troublous labour conditions in the various parts of this State as indicated by the statement made by the Dewan-President in this House yesterday regarding the notices of general strikes issued by labour associations in Quilon and Alleppey."

Does the House give leave to allow this motion ?

(There was a show of hands by eight honourable members).

I cannot give any time for this motion until the last day of the Council. It will be discussed on the 16th instant.

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT.

President: Order, order. Before I make the announcement regarding the general discussion, I wish to say a few words to the honourable House, arising out of certain matters of very recent occurrence which this House should know. After my statement to the Joint Session, certain important developments have taken place in India and although the discussion of these matters is not allowable according to the present rules governing the Legislative bodies in the State, this Government, as I have stated on the previous occasion, have always been of the opinion that any steps taken by them or any policy propounded by them should be made known to the members of the Legislature. After the meeting of the Joint Session, it is now known to honourable members that the Muslim League has declined to cooperate and has announced the policy of direct action on the ground that its point of view has not been adequately considered. Honourable members will realise that the statement made by the Cabinet Mission was to the effect that a Constituent Assembly will be brought into existence and the general idea was that the Constituent Assembly would meet early in September. That Constituent Assembly when it first meets, would have no representatives of the Indian States on it. The parties that would meet are the parties who participated in the elections. They participated in the elections on purely communal basis, that is, the elections were those which were called general, those which were called Sikh and those which were called Muslim. Now the Sikhs have passed a resolution that they would have nothing to

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do with the Constituent Assembly. Thereafter, certain negotiations are going on and I understand that this afternoon a deputation of Sikhs is going to wait upon the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress and some kind of decision will no doubt be arrived at. At the present moment, the position is that the Sikhs are not in the Constituent Assembly. The Muslims are not in the Constituent Assembly, and what is more, two leading representatives of the Muslim League, the Nawab of Mamdot and Nawab Liaquat Hyat Khan, have both stated that not only will they boycott the Constituent Assembly, not only will they start direct action, but that with all means of constitutional and extra constitutional power in their hands, they will prevent the formation of an interim Government. Therefore the only residual powers now in regard to the Cabinet Delegation's Scheme, are: (*a*) the Congress which have accepted the long term scheme but not the interim Government-scheme and (*b*) the States. The States, as I have told this honourable House, will not come into the picture at all until after the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly. It is not known what the policy, either of the Congress or the Muslim League or the Government of India or the British Government is, if one or more parties boycott the Assembly—whether they are going to have only the Congress as constituting the whole of the Constituent Assembly. That is a matter on which the decision of the Congress will be given today or tomorrow, and I do not wish either to anticipate it or to say anything which will make things difficult for anybody participating in those discussions. It is after the Constituent Assembly meets and after grouping takes place, which cannot take place in the absence of the Muslim League, and after two Committees are appointed—one for fundamental rights and the other for minorities—that the Indian States through their Negotiating Committee will negotiate or have been requested to negotiate with a similar Committee to be appointed by the other members, *viz.*, the Congress, the Muslim League and the Sikhs taken together. In this position, I have no desire on the part of this Government to say anything except this—that this Government adhere to the determination expressed on behalf of this Government and on behalf of the Indian States generally—that they are willing and anxious to go into an All-India Union with fairly strong powers of an All-India character vested in the centre. This Government even now adheres to that opinion, but there is, however, one matter

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which this Government wish to make absolutely clear. By negotiation is meant negotiation ; nothing else than negotiation is meant by that word. Speeches that have been made by certain very important persons connected with the Congress have made it clear that whereas they are reconciled to residual independence on the part of the Provinces, Maulana Abul Kalaam Azad differing in that respect from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has definiteiy re-enunciated it yesterday that the Congress is not prepared to grant any independence to Indian States. Indeed, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has stated: "No independence of any kind will be allowed by us." Now that may or may not be so. I do not wish to detract from the tremendous position of vantage possessed by the Congress nor do I want to minimise the hold that Mahatma Gandhi has on the public of India and indeed on the public opinion of the world. But no State will ever consent to dictation of that kind and I wish to make that statement when the Congress is going to meet in Working Committee today that speaking on the side of this Government and I make bold to say, speaking on behalf of many other Indian States as well, whose opinion I am acquainted with, they are perfectly willing to negotiate and come to terms with the Congress on two conditions and on two conditions alone. Those conditions are, one, that the dynastic rights of the present Rulers of the State will be preserved intact. Dr. Pattabhi Seetharamayya's idea of dethronement of every State, the Rulers must be facc to face with the dethronement that is taking place all around them—that idea, this Government and many other State Governments wish to repel. They should not like to negotiate with anybody with the idea that the dynastic rights and privileges of the Rulers are going to be affected by any arrangement or any dictation of any political body. Secondly, that the question of trying to say that only one form of Government is possible, that a Ruler or anybody in connection with the new constitutional reforms can only think of one system of Government which the Congress has advocated has to be given up in the course of the negotiations. Let me end by saying as I started in the beginning that this State, like many other States, is quite willing to negotiate with the Congress ; quite willing to make common cause with the Congress for the purpose of attaining Indian independence and Indian freedom. But the State must insist that the States must remain and continue to remain States, and that the rights of the dynasty and of the Rulers should not be abrogated, minimised or

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President.

taken away. In any system of Government, which this Government have also stated, the people must have an active participation in the work of every department of Government. There may be many methods of attaining that end and we would leave it largely to discussion between the leaders of public opinion in the States and the Rulers of those States rather than that any dictation should come from outside. I may only say that what I said in the joint session with regard to the particular form of the Westminster type of responsible Government has been enforced and re-emphasised by what is happening again in Sind and the Punjab. Yesterday, a person who was in the Coalition party went over to the Muslim League. Half way through his vote, he came back to the Coalition party. After having voted with the Coalition party he joined the Muslim League. This morning another person said that he joined the Muslim League in the hope that they would do some work but as the Muslim League was ever looking after personal aggrandisement of the Muslim League, he joined the Coalition party. The same thing has happened in Sind. Here again, we have no right to criticise, but a constitutional crisis has now developed in our sister State. The Cochin ministry has resigned on a vote of immediate responsible government. A vote of want of confidence was sought to be moved against the ministry on the ground not that they did their work badly but because they did not press for immediate responsible government. On that issue the ministry was defeated by 29 votes to 13—a no-confidence motion moved by the leader or the opposition charged the ministry with not having made efforts to advance immediate responsible government in the State. The two ministers of Cochin—Mr. Lonappan and Mr. Balakrishna Menon have resigned following this no-confidence motion.

I am not blaming any party. I am not criticising what has taken place elsewhere but in relation to the constitution of Travancore, I can say this. Supposing such a state of things arises here. What is the position? Today no other person can take up the ministry in Cochin unless immediate responsible government is given because a vote of no-confidence has been passed and there is no responsible government, and no other persons can become ministers without that responsible government having been established. Therefore, the only alternative is the immediate establishment in the course of today, of responsible

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government. Otherwise the business of the Council cannot go on. Immediate responsible government must be established to-day, or all business must be stopped unless of course they go back as British India has done to a caretaker Government and Sir George Boag retains the administration. That is the kind of crisis which this Government have been trying to guard against. There must be some continuity of executive administration. Supposing a ministry is constantly thinking of the possibility of going out of office on some ground or other to-morrow or the day after. Then it will not be possible to do the tremendous amount of work which is essential for us at this critical juncture in our history. Let me not be understood to have criticised anything that has taken place in Cochin. They are at perfect liberty to pass any resolution and to remove any ministry and to institute an immediate responsible government if His Highness makes up his mind to grant it in the course of the next 24 hours. That will undoubtedly be an epoch-making step.

One more matter and I shall finish. There is a feeling of suspicion expressed in many newspapers and other sources, that the Government do not propose to take anybody into confidence before promulgating their scheme of reforms. That is not so. This Government have stated only four conditions which are fundamental. I have expressed this to the other House on another occasion, when, in the course of the general discussion this question was definitely raised. And I am mentioning it here in order that honourable members may be fully apprised of it. Government do propose to take into confidence the public and all the constituted organised parties in the State including the Communists, the State Congress and the various parties that are functioning in this House and elsewhere, the Nair Service Society and the S. N. D. P. Yogam and all the Muslim associations and others. But that will be done as soon as our preliminary steps on the subject are completed. Those steps proceed on four assumptions. Those are final and inescapable. His Highness who is, after all, handing over some of his powers does not wish to hand them over excepting on this footing. What is that? First of all, adult suffrage; that is, the final decision, adult suffrage of all over a particular age; secondly, two completely elected legislatures, one elected on the basis of territorial constituencies and the other on a functional basis; thirdly, non-official Presidents and non-official personnel, in both the Chambers; and fourthly, the obligation of the Executive to respect and carry out the decisions of the Legislature subject to certain definite vetoes, the exercise of these vetoes on every occasion to be explained publicly. Those are the only funda-

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[President.]

mental things which cannot be departed from. The constitution on that basis, is being framed and it is hoped to be ready in about a couple of months. As soon as that is ready, whatever may happen or may not happen in British India a kind of conference will be summoned and the opinion of the people obtained. That is all I wish to say.

PROCEDURE REGARDING GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET AND THE VOTING OF DEMANDS FOR GRANTS

The debate on the budget will begin today with a general discussion followed by the voting of demands for grants from the next day. The maximum of four days allowed under Rule 74 of the Legislative Rules has been allotted for the latter. The demands will be discussed in the order in which they appear in the printed list placed in your hands. The demand under III—Public Works Department, including Water Works and Drainage may be discussed for two hours, and not more than one hour will be allotted for each of the remaining demands. If the time taken up for questions and answers is less than an hour, the remaining time will also be available to the House for the voting of demands, but such available time will not go to increase the time allotted for any one demand, and will only enable the House to reach more demands.

Honourable members of the Council are, of course, aware that they should discuss each demand as a whole, and vote upon it as a whole, without moving for the reduction of any grant or of any item in a grant. To enable the discussion of each demand in the Council, it is not necessary that the members should send in any specific motion, and the Council will have the right to assent or refuse its assent to any demand when it is put to the House.

During the general discussion no member other than the Financial Secretary will be allowed more than 15 minutes, and in the voting of demands for grants the time limit for speeches for members will be 10 minutes. I hope honourable members will so adjust their speeches as to make it possible for a large number of their colleagues including the official members to participate in the debate.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup : With regard to the discussion on the demands, I move that the following order may be accepted.

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